

VZCZCXRO5308  
PP RUEHROV  
DE RUEHEG #1543 1441130  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 241130Z MAY 07  
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5334  
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 001543

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/24/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNSC](#) [KPKO](#) [EG](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: DARFUR: "OPERATIONAL ISSUES SHOULD BE WORKED OUT  
BETWEEN AFRICAN UNION, UNITED NATIONS, AND KHARTOUM"

REF: A. SECSTATE 68240  
[B](#). SECSTATE 68168  
[C](#). CAIRO 1360  
[D](#). CAIRO 1443

Classified by Minister Counselor for Economic and Political  
Affairs William R. Stewart for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Poloff delivered ref A/B demarches to MFA  
Cabinet Advisor Ahmed Abu Zeid on May 24. Abu Zeid warned of  
potential fallout from pressing Khartoum too hard on  
"operational issues" related to the AU/UN Darfur peace  
keeping operation; issues he felt should be worked out by  
UN/AU/GOS experts. Egypt is focused on political  
reconciliation in Darfur, and is awaiting a reply from  
Washington on Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit's recent proposal  
of a Darfur "roadmap." The GOE is not seeking to bring  
Darfur rebels to Cairo for reconciliation talks. On Egypt's  
troop offer for the Heavy Support Package, the Ministry of  
Defense is refusing to send Egyptian engineering units  
without accompanying infantry for protection, and will only  
send requested APCs with Egyptian personnel. End summary.

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GOE Cautious on Pushing UN Command and Control  
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[1](#)2. (C) Poloff raised refs A and B points on implementing the  
HSP for Darfur with MFA cabinet staffer responsible for  
African affairs Ahmed Abu Zeid on May 24. Abu Zeid  
acknowledged that all concerned parties, including the  
Sudanese government, had already agreed on the points in ref  
A paragraph 5 (left as a non-paper). However, Abu Zeid  
thought that the points on command and control and unity of  
command might provoke the GOS to be less cooperative on HSP  
implementation, and repeated Egypt's stance that the  
international community must "build confidence" with the GOS  
rather than threaten it. Abu Zeid stressed that the Abuja  
and Addis Ababa agreements left command and control  
intentionally ambiguous. Operational details, he argued, are  
best left for the tripartite UN/AU/GOS committee.

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GOE Focused on Political Reconciliation  
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[1](#)3. (C) Egypt is focused on political reconciliation, said Abu  
Zeid, citing Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit's recent oral  
message to Washington and others proposing a "roadmap" for  
Darfur (ref C). Abu Zeid heard from Egypt's Washington  
embassy that a draft response from Secretary Rice was  
generally positive towards the Egyptian idea, but viewed as  
negative Egypt's idea for an international meeting in Addis  
to discuss the plan. Abu Zeid disputed the notion that such  
a meeting would allow the GOS to back-track on its  
commitments. To the contrary, the meeting would demonstrate  
support by the international community for the roadmap and  
progress on resolving the conflict in Darfur. Abu Zeid

stressed that the international community must agree to hold both the GOS and rebel groups accountable for any obstruction on political reconciliation.

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Rebel Groups to Cairo?  
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14. (C) Discussing Cairo-based Sudanese opposition leader Mohamed Osman Mirghani's initiative for political reconciliation in Darfur (ref D), Abu Zeid said that media reports were "misleading" and that the GOE was not working on any such initiative, nor inviting non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) to Cairo. However, the GOE does keep its doors open to Sudanese opposition and DPA non-signatories who transit Cairo.

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Update on Egyptian Troop Offer  
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15. (C) Ministry of Defense Assistant Minister for Armament Major General Fouad Abd Al Halim told polmiloff on May 21 that the UN asked Egypt to replace the mechanized infantry battalions that Egypt had offered for the HSP with engineering units. According to Fouad, Egypt will not consider sending such engineering units without an Egyptian infantry battalion accompanying them for protection. Fouad said that the UN also asked to "rent" 36 APCs, which Fouad found unacceptable; Egypt would not send APCs without Egyptian personnel to operate them.  
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